



FIRST THINGS FIRST

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Tohono O'odham Nation Regional Partnership Council

Call to Order/Welcome/Introductions

A Regular Meeting of the First Things First Tohono O'odham Nation Regional Partnership Council took place on January 11, 2014 at the Pisinemo Head Start and Early Learning Center, North of Indian Route 28 South of State Highway 86, Pisinemo, Arizona 85634. Vice Chair Mildred Manuel welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

Members Present:

Vice Chair Mildred Manuel, Cheryl Conde, Janine Prewitt, Dionne Ramon, Dr. Albert Adler, Kymberlii Tenario, Ella Begay

Members Present Telephonically:

Joseph Mease

Members Absent:

Chair Louis Johnson

Invocation

Member Begay provided the invocation.

Approval of November 15, 2013 Tohono O'odham Nation Regional Partnership Council Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by member Mease that the Tohono O'odham Nation Regional Partnership Council approve the minutes of the November 15, 2013 Regional Council meeting as presented. Some discussion was had about the minutes. The motion was seconded by member Prewitt. Motion carried.

Call to the Public

Abby Eason, Pima County Health Department: Ms. Eason let the regional council know that the Pima County Health Department is conducting classes to train healthcare professionals to become Childcare Health Consultants. She expressed the department's desire to recruit members of the Tohono O'odham Nation for the positions that will serve people of that community. Additionally, she informed the regional council of the outbreak of whooping cough this year, and passed out handouts about the flu shot and TDap vaccine.

Tohono O'odham Nation Regional Partnership Council Grant Agreement GRA-RC026-14-0679-01 Expansion, Start-Up and/or Capital Expense with the B.U.S.D.

Vice Chair Manuel turned the floor over to Regional Director Travis Le Duc who let the regional council know that First Things First had still not received a completed grant agreement from the Baboquivari Unified School District, but that he had received a verbal request from Connie Ross earlier in the week to make the funding available in 2015. He reminded the regional council that the proposed funding plan as it currently stood would go to the First Things First State Board for approval on January 22, 2014, and if the regional council decided to honor this request, they would need to take action on it at the February 2014 meeting and then submit a request to modify the funding plan to the State Board.

Vice Chair Manuel then turned the floor over to Ana Otero Pietrzak of the Baboquivari Unified School District who reiterated the district's request that the funding in the grant agreement be made available in SFY 2015.

Vice Chair Manuel expressed her disappointment that the agreement was not accepted and asked Mr. Le Duc to explain why it had not been accepted for this fiscal year, and to explain the communication that had occurred between First Things First and B.U.S.D. surrounding the agreement. Mr. Le Duc gave a general overview of the events leading up to this point. He explained that the regional council voted to provide the funding to the B.U.S.D. in July of 2013. It was approved by the board and B.U.S. D. was given six weeks to complete the grant application. During this time, Mr. Le Duc offered technical assistance to B.U.S.D. on several occasions. The grant application was not returned within the six weeks and an extension was given to the middle of December. The application was still not returned by the end of the extension. At this point, First Things First has yet to receive a completed grant application from B.U.S. D. and B.U.S.D. has now asked for the funds to be awarded in SFY 2015.

Ms. Otero Pietrzak commented that she was not aware of these circumstances and that she was there primarily to ask for the extension. Speaking to the extension, she thought it was more based on continuity, to keep the money together for an entire school year. She asked that her comments be on the record: "We can't accept the money this year due to the fact that we can't journal entry back (I'm not familiar with some of these terms). It would be a supplanting issue".

Mr. Le Duc and Member Prewitt responded that they had no response to that comment due to the fact that there was no written response to the grant opportunity.

Member Manuel reiterated her disappointment about the difficulty of the funding process, and that she felt that the regional council had not been helping the children of the nation at the level that they could be.

Mr. Le Duc and other council members expressed that they shared Member Manuel's frustration, but discussion was had by regional council members of the successes that they had achieved and of the opportunities that had been provided to children and members of the community as a result of their work.

Tohono O'odham Nation Regional Partnership Council Grant Agreement GRA-RC026-14-0674-01 Quality First Child Care Scholarships with the Tohono O'odham Nation

Vice Chair Manuel turned the floor over to Mr. Le Duc who introduced Ms. Victoria Hobbs, Executive Director of the Tohono O'odham Nation Education Department. Ms. Hobbs commented on the previous conversation and voiced to the regional council that their role as a council is to provide the funds, and it is the job of the programs to manage the grant. She also expressed to the regional council that despite the fact that there is still work to be done; they have come a long way.

Ms. Hobbs then commented on the Quality First Child Care Scholarships Grant Agreement. She let the council know that the contract is currently at the Attorney General's office and that the Attorney General is recommending changes in the verbiage of the clauses of the contract. She is continuing to follow up on it and is hoping that it will be released from the Attorney General in the next few days.

Tohono O'odham Nation Regional Partnership Council Strategy Expansion, Start-up and/or Capital Expense with the Tohono O'odham Nation

Mr. Le Duc provided a brief update on this strategy, letting the council know that the Tohono O'odham Education Department has not yet received the grant application because it was being held for language modifications. Director Hobbs has asked that First Things First go ahead and send it forward, although it may get caught up in the same process at the Attorney General as discussed during the previous agenda item.

Presentation on School Readiness Indicators and Corresponding Agreement with the Tohono O'odham Nation

The floor was turned over to Ina Perez, Tribal Data Partnership Coordinator for First Things First. She reviewed the First Things First 10 School Readiness Indicators, which measure whether or not children are ready to enter kindergarten. They will be using these indicators to collect data about the children of the Tohono O'odham Nation, from sources specific to the Nation. Right now she is in the beginning stages of seeking permission from the Nation to collect the data.

Presentation on First Things First Nutrition, Physical Activity, Obesity Prevention Strategies

The floor was turned over to Dr. Christine Stein, Senior Program Specialist (Child Health) for First Things First. Dr. Stein provided a presentation that included information on the importance of nutrition and physical activity, data highlights, and information on the First Things First Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Prevention Strategy.

General Discussion

Mr. Le Duc informed the regional council of the members whose terms would be expiring in June of 2014, which included Member Ramon, Member Tenario, Member Mease, Member Prewitt and Member Adler. He encouraged the members to re-apply and encouraged the regional council members to inform others who might be interested in applying for vacant positions.

Dr. Adler provided a reminder to regional council members about the danger of the flu, the fact that it can even kill children who are otherwise healthy, and that the death rate for flu is four times higher for Native Americans as it is for other populations. She stressed the importance of getting the vaccination for the flu, as well as pertussis.


Call to the Public

Ana Otero Pietrzak, Baboquivari Unified School District: Ms. Otero Pietrzak asked that her comments be on the record: "I would like to express some concern and reiterate the ideas of Ms. Victoria Hobbs earlier, the director of the Tohono O'odham Education Department. I believe in earnest that to support the children of the nation the grants must be awarded with the knowledge of the legal issues that the districts have when accepting and using these grants and as I became more familiar with the process, there are legal issues that come up, and that's some as to what happened with BUSD today and possibly with other districts. My concern is that this was expressed to the leadership of the council, relating to our specific grant. We do have enough funds to take care of everything that we need to do this year and the specific grant that we have for the next school year will take care of everything with this. So I think a better conversation than blasting the districts is to get an understanding of their particular issues and how to best serve the community and its children. Personally I felt that the BUSD was very blasted today and so I think a better conversation would be how to support, how to know what their particular issues are, and how to really support the children and the community."

Adjourn

As there was no further business, Vice Chair Manuel adjourned the meeting at 12:19 p.m.

Submitted By 
Emily McDuffie, Administrative Assistant

Approved By 
Mildred Manuel, Vice Chair

Dated this 8 day of Feb, 2014.

